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hypocrisy, humiliation, and cheating are not done at the door of the forge."

5. Envy, jealousy, and ill humor are generally bad for the blacksmith who loses his "turn of the hand." He must "have a pure heart" (1).

> 1. Numu te keleya note i bolo na tye: "The blacksmith must not be jealous, otherwise his hand is spoiled."

6. A mirror must never be brought near the forge; it would take hold of its soul which resides in the axe at the altar (2).

> 2. Dugalle te gere fã na a kanana; ka fã ni tã: "The mirror must not be brought near the forge; it will take the soul from the forge."

[834] 7. Sexual relations near the forge prevent its functioning (3).

> 3. Noa te gere fa nda la: "No obscene action may take place near the door of the forge."

Breaking the taboos of the forge is equivalent to attacking the virility of the blacksmith, for the bellows are his testicles. Thus the artisans present themselves naked before the culprit to shame him; he is seated on the communal anvil and water in which large [783] millet (keninge) has been soaking is poured over his head to purify the instrument (4).

> 4. If the fault is irreparable, the kneeling chief crushes three grains of large millet (keninge) on the anvil, a gesture which symbolizes the death of the culprit whose name he pronounces at the same time.

794 292 The costume worn by the dancer is held up by a sort of carcass (bry) made of ngolobe (1) wood used because of its flexibility, and is

1. Combretum micranthum.

enveloped with a light blanket for protection. Inside the bry are suspended various flutes (komo fle) which are blackened by the blood of sacrifices offered to "improve their sound" and which will be used in the course of the ceremonies. Along with these flutes is a little bag filled with spare spider webs. Any individual who goes under the [834] bry to dance must abstain from sexual relations for a specified period of time prior to the ceremony.

The costume (nya) which covers the carcass is made with the clothing of individuals killed by the Komo (2). Contrary to the bry, which

2. When a guilty member or a noninitiate is "killed" by the Komo, his clothing is offered to it.

has no active role but serves only to isolate the dancer inside the mask, the religious role of the costume is very important. It represents the "body and the valor of the ancestors." It is not the object of blood sacrifices, but is covered by a powder made of the bones of individuals killed by the Komo to which has been added kola nut juice. The 794 cloth is dyed with black earth taken from the river bank in exchange 292 for a small offering of copper, gold, or cereals. Drawings called 532 komo mani (literally, little people of the Komo) are made on the cloth to represent Faro on the one hand, recognizable by his long black hair, and on the other the eight ancestors who received the word. All the first agricultural implements of the Bambara are drawn with red ochre. The feathers of black, white, and red egrets are then sewn on the nya to hide /151/ the black earth, which is the spirit's abode. Two days before everything is taken out, these feathers are the object of offerings of kola nut juice, millet mash, and the blood of fowls.

794 292 784 The costume, like the head of the mask, must be seen neither by women nor by noninitiates. "Its color would change and it would become dull, making a purification necessary."

794 532 The body of the mask has two arms into which the dancer introduces his own. The arms terminate in a hook, koli (3), which is